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THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE
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AVENGERS
THE CHILDREN'S CRUSADE

United by friendship and bravery, Patriot, Hawkeye, Wiccan, Hulkling, Stature, Speed and the Vision are the Young Avengers, following in the footsteps of Earth's Mightiest Heroes!

NOTE: BECAUSE WORK BEGAN ON THIS SERIES MANY MONTHS AGO, THERE ARE SOME SEEMING DISCREPANCIES AS REGARDS THE ATTIRE OF CERTAIN CHARACTERS, PARTICULARLY CAPTAIN AMERICA AND IRON MAN. BY THE TIME THIS SERIES CONCLUDES, IT SHOULD BECOME APPARENT WHERE ITS EVENTS FALL WITHIN THE OVERALL ONGOING CONTINUITY. UNTIL THEN, WE FEEL CONFIDENT THAT OUR LOYAL READERS WILL BE ABLE TO OVERLOOK THESE SEEMING INCONSISTENCIES. RELAX, AND ENJOY THE SHOW...

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IN THE BEGINNING, NOBODY KNEW WHAT TO MAKE OF US.
SEVEN SUPER-POWERED AVENGERS FANS--WHO ONLY CAME TOGETHER BECAUSE THE AVENGERS THEMSELVES HAD FALLEN APART.
SINCE THEN, WE'VE FOUGHT KANG THE CONQUEROR, A SUPER HERO CIVIL WAR, A SECRET INVASION OF EARTH, AND A SIEGE ON ASGARD.
SO YOU'D THINK MAYBE THE AVENGERS WOULD *TRUST* US BY NOW...
...BUT WE'RE STILL FIGHTING TO PROVE WE'RE WORTHY OF BEING CALLED
YOUNG AVENGERS
...EVEN IF IT *KILLS* US.

CASSIE LANG'S FATHER WAS THE MICROSCOPIC ANT-MAN. AFTER HIS DEATH, CASSIE USED HER DAD'S PYM PARTICLES TO FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS AS THE SIZE-CHANGING STATURE
ANY INTEL ON THESE GUYS, VISION?
VISION IS THE LATEST ITERATION OF THE ANDROID AVENGER WHO CAN MANIPULATE HIS OWN DENSITY--AND WHOSE SYNTHEZOID SOUL MAKES HIM EVERY BIT AS HUMAN AS THE REST OF US.
THEY CALL THEMSELVES THE SONS OF THE SERPENT--A PARAMILITARY SECT DEVOTED TO MAINTAINING RACIAL AND MORAL PURITY.

ELI BRADLEY'S GRANDFATHER WAS THE ORIGINAL CAPTAIN AMERICA. A THIRD GENERATION SUPER-SOLDIER, ELI CONTINUES TO FIGHT FOR PEACE AS PATRIOT
THEY'RE WHITE SUPREMACISTS.
TO BE FAIR, THEY ALSO HATE GAYS AND LESBIANS.
AND UPPITY WOMEN APPARENTLY.
THEN WE MUST BE THEIR LEAST FAVORITE SUPER HERO TEAM EVER.
FORMER NEW YORK SOCIETY DEB KATE BISHOP SO IMPRESSED CAPTAIN AMERICA ON THE BATTLEFIELD THAT HE GAVE HER CLINT BARTON'S BOW AND DUBBED HER THE NEW HAWKEYE

TOMMY SHEPHERD HAS SUPER-SPEED, WHITE HAIR, AND A CRIMINAL PAST--ALL OF WHICH HE SHARES WITH THE FORMER AVENGER QUICKSILVER. FOR OBVIOUS REASONS, HE'S CALLED SPEED
SOUNDS LIKE THE WORLD WOULD BE BETTER OFF WITHOUT THEM.
THAT'S HOW THEY FEEL ABOUT US, SO GO EASY. THEY DON'T HAVE POWERS, JUST TECH.
THANKS TO ME, NOW THEY DON'T EVEN HAVE THAT.
HE ALSO HAPPENS TO LOOK EXACTLY LIKE ME. WHICH--IN ADDITION TO MY HAVING MAGIC POWERS--MAKES ME THINK TOMMY AND I MIGHT ACTUALLY BE THE LONG LOST TWIN SONS OF QUICKSILVER'S SISTER, THE SCARLET WITCH. MY NAME IS BILLY KAPLAN, BUT IN THE FIELD I'M CALLED WICCAN

A SUPER-STRONG SHAPE-SHIFTER, TEDDY ALTMAN IS THE SON OF THE KREE CAPTAIN MARVEL. LIKE HIS LATE FATHER, TEDDY PROTECTS THE PLANET AS HULKLING
"AS THE SERPENT DROVE ADAM AND EVE FROM EDEN...SO SHALL WE DRIVE OUT THE UNFIT--THE INFERIOR!"
YOU'RE ACTUALLY USING THE BIBLE TO JUSTIFY MURDER?
WHAT WOULD YOU KNOW ABOUT THE BIBLE, SODOMITE?
HE'S ALSO MY BOYFRIEND.
THIS SODOMITE WENT TO AN EPISCOPAL SCHOOL FOR SIX YEARS. SO IF YOU WANT TO SWAP BIBLE VERSES, HOW ABOUT EXODUS TWENTY-ONE, VERSE TWENTY-FOUR...

...“AN EYE FOR AN EYE.”
DO IT. MARTYR ME AND SHOW THE WORLD EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF MONSTER YOU ARE.
RRRIIIP
IF YOU INSIST.
SMAK
YOU'LL BURN IN HELL FOR THAT.
WAIT--YOU SPEND YOUR FREE TIME KILLING PEOPLE, BUT I'M GOING TO HELL FOR KISSING YOU?
IT WASN'T EVEN A GOOD KISS.
PROVERBS 12:28. “IN THE PATH OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS EVERLASTING LIFE...”
“...BUT THE WAY OF THE EVIL-DOER ENDS IN DEATH.”
ZZZOT
HULKLING!!!
I HAVE TO ADMIT, I UNDERESTIMATED YOU GUYS.
I THOUGHT THE SONS OF THE SERPENT WOULD AT LEAST BE RACIST ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT HULKLING IS HALF-KREE, WHICH MAKES HIM INVULNERABLE...

...IT WAS WICCAN.
"DID I KILL THOSE MEN?"

YOUNG AVENGERS HEADQUARTERS.
THEY WERE ALL RENDERED COMATOSE.
THE HOSPITAL JUST CALLED TO SAY THE FIRST ONES ARE WAKING UP NOW-- BUT NONE OF THEM HAS ANY IDEA WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM.
DO WE HAVE ANY IDEA WHAT HAPPENED TO THEM?
WICCAN?
I HONESTLY DON'T KNOW.
ONE MINUTE WE WERE FIGHTING THE SONS OF THE SERPENT, AND THE NEXT...
YOU PUT THEM ALL INTO COMAS WITH A SINGLE THOUGHT. YOU MIGHT JUST AS EASILY HAVE KILLED THEM.
I WOULD NEVER--
YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF, WICCAN. AND NEITHER DO WE.
SO YOU'RE GOING TO BE STAYING WITH US FOR A WHILE.
WHAT? WHY?
BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT ANOTHER SCARLET WITCH ON OUR HANDS.
WHAT IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?
CAROL--
TELL HIM, TONY.
HE SHOULD KNOW.

THE SCARLET WITCH HAS THE POWER TO ALTER REALITY TO SUIT HER WHIM--WHICH MAKES HER THE MOST POWERFUL AND DANGEROUS ENTITY IN THE KNOWN UNIVERSE.
SHE BLAMED THE AVENGERS FOR THE LOSS OF HER SONS AND LASHED OUT AT US, LOSING CONTROL OF HER POWERS, AND CAUSING THE DEATHS OF THE ORIGINAL VISION, HAWKEYE, AND CASSIE'S DAD, ANT-MAN.
HER FATHER, MAGNETO, AND HER BROTHER, QUICKSILVER, TOOK HER TO THE ISLAND OF GENOSHA TO HELP HER RECOVER...
... BUT FEARING FOR HIS SISTER'S SAFETY, QUICKSILVER PERSUADED WANDA TO USE HER POWERS TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD INTO ONE WHERE MAGNETO AND HIS FAMILY REIGNED SUPREME...
... UNTIL THOSE OF US WHO WERE ABLE TO REMEMBER OUR FORMER LIVES FOUGHT TO RECLAIM THEM.
DEVASTATED BY ALL THE BLOOD SHED BY HER FAMILY IN THE NAME OF MUTANTKIND, THE SCARLET WITCH CAST ONE LAST SPELL...
NO MORE MUTANTS.
...ROBBING OVER A MILLION MUTANTS OF THEIR POWERS AND COMMITTING WHAT SOME CONSIDER MUTANT GENOCIDE.
AND YOU THINK I HAVE THE POWER TO DO SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

...CAN WE TALK ABOUT THE FACT THAT YOU JUST WALKED OUT ON THE AVENGERS?
I DID NOT.
I WALKED OUT ON CAP AND IRON MAN AND--
LIKE I SAID--
THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE ME PRISONER.
THEY WERE GOING TO TAKE YOUR TEMPERATURE.
I THINK.
YOU THINK?
OH, MY GOD.
I JUST WALKED OUT ON THE AVENGERS.
WHY IS THAT A BAD THING? EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES ARE AFRAID OF YOU. THAT'S HOW POWERFUL YOU ARE.
BY WALKING OUT, YOU PROBABLY EARNED THEIR RESPECT. EVEN I'M HATING YOU A LITTLE LESS THAN USUAL.
THANKS, TOMMY. THAT MEANS A LOT.
NOW, WOULD ANYONE OTHER THAN THE TEAM SOCIOPATH CARE TO WEIGH IN ON THIS?
GUYS...?

BILLY, YOU TOOK OUT TWENTY GUYS WITH GUNS AND NUKES ALL BY YOURSELF.
AND YOU DON'T EVEN REMEMBER DOING IT.
TWENTY BAD GUYS, KATE...
...AND I DIDN'T HURT THEM.
YOU COULD HAVE.
I WOULD NEVER--
BILLY...
...YOU LOST CONTROL.
SO YOU THINK THE AVENGERS ARE RIGHT ABOUT ME?
I DIDN'T SAY THAT.
YOU'RE JUST AFRAID THEY MIGHT BE.
CAN WE PLEASE JUST TALK ABOUT THIS LIKE THE MATURE, SEMI-ADULT SUPER HEROES WE WANT THE AVENGERS TO THINK WE ARE?
I'M NOT INTERESTED IN WHAT THE AVENGERS THINK ANYMORE.
AND THIS IS MY PROBLEM, NOT YOURS.
I'LL FIGURE IT OUT BY MY...

...BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU WISH FOR.
IT'S JUST UNTIL WE GET A SENSE OF WHAT YOU'RE CAPABLE OF.
CAP? ARE YOU SERIOUSLY TRYING TO HAIL US A CAB RIGHT NOW?
UNLESS YOU'D RATHER TAKE THE SUBWAY. BECAUSE, UNLIKE IRON MAN, I CAN'T...
...FLY.
THIS IS ONE OF THE THINGS I'M CAPABLE OF.
UNLESS YOU'D RATHER TAKE THE SUBWAY.
ARE YOU KIDDING?
THIS IS SO MUCH BETTER THAN RIDING ON IRON MAN'S BOOT.
C'MON, I'LL RACE YOU.
"CAP? MAY I ASK YOU SOMETHING?"

YOU'VE KNOWN THE SCARLET WITCH LONGER THAN ANYONE. YOU'RE THE ONE WHO MADE HER AN AVENGER.
IN ALL THAT TIME, DID YOU EVER THINK SHE'D BE CAPABLE OF HURTING HER OWN TEAMMATES?
NEVER.
BUT LOSING A CHILD--LOSING TWO CHILDREN--IT CHANGES YOU. THAT'S SOMETHING YOU NEVER RECOVER FROM.
BUT I DON'T THINK SHE HAS LOST HER KIDS.
BILLY, I JUST MET YOUR PARENTS. YOUR BIOLOGICAL PARENTS--
I'M NOT SAYING TOMMY AND I ARE THE BIOLOGICAL SONS OF THE SCARLET WITCH. I'M NOT INSANE. I'M TALKING ABOUT THE TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS.
WHICH, NOW THAT I'M SAYING IT OUT LOUD, SOUNDS A LITTLE
I HAVE TO WARN YOU, A CONNECTION TO WANDA IS NOT GOING TO WIN YOU ANY FRIENDS WHEN WE GET TO AVENGERS TOWER.
DID YOU GUYS EVEN CONSIDER THAT SHE MIGHT BE INNOCENT?
I WAS THERE. SHE'S NOT INNOCENT.
BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW SHE WASN'T POSSESSED BY SOMEONE? BY IMMORTUS, OR CHTHON! IT HAPPENED BEFORE. IT COULD HAPPEN AGAIN.
BECAUSE DR. STRANGE WOULD HAVE DETECTED IT.
I HEARD DR. STRANGE'S POWERS AREN'T WHAT THEY USED TO BE.
YOU THINK YOU'RE MORE POWERFUL THAN DR. STRANGE?
I GUESS THAT'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO FIND OUT.
NOT WITHOUT ME, YOU'RE NOT.

TEDDY!
HULKLING, I UNDERSTAND YOU WANT TO PROTECT YOUR FRIEND, BUT--
CAPTAIN, I UNDERSTAND YOU'RE CONCERNED ABOUT BILLY, BUT IF ANYTHING HAPPENS TO HIM...
YOUR PRIMARY CONCERN SHOULD BE ME.
TED--
BILLY AND I ARE PARTNERS. WHERE HE GOES, I GO. AND IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT--
I HAVE NO PROBLEM WITH THAT.
YOU DON'T?
YOU DON'T?
NO. IN FACT...

"...I'LL HAVE JARVIS PREPARE YOUR ROOM."
TWIN BEDS?
IS IT A GUEST ROOM OR A HOLDING CELL?
IT'S JUST A LITTLE LACKING IN MAGIC. THAT'S ALL.
BETTER?
MINTS ON THE PILLOWS. NICE TOUCH.
I COULDN'T HELP MYSELF.
I'M NOT COMPLAINING.
SORRY ABOUT TODAY.
YOU COULDN'T HELP YOURSELF.
WHAT DO YOU THINK THEY'LL DO TO ME?
THEY'LL RUN SOME TESTS-- YOU'LL SIT DOWN WITH DR. STRANGE-- AND THEN WE'RE OUT OF HERE.
PROMISE?
PROMISE.
ARE WE ABOUT TO MAKE OUT IN AVENGERS HEADQUARTERS?
THE MINUTE YOU STOP TALKING.
I'M NOT TALKING ANYMORE.
AS OF NOW, THAT WAS THE LAST TALKING.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU IDIOTS DOING?

TOMMY--
WE GO TO ALL THE TROUBLE TO RESCUE YOU, AND YOU TWO ARE IN HERE MAKING OUT? YOU'RE PRISONERS. PRISONERS DON'T STAND AROUND MAKING OUT WITH EACH OTHER.
DO THEY?
SORRY TO INTERRUPT, GENTLEMEN...
...BUT I CAN ONLY DISRUPT THE ALARM SYSTEM FOR SO LONG BEFORE THE AVENGERS NOTICE.
BILLY, CAN YOU MAGIC US OUT?
ACTUALLY, TOMMY--
I GUESS IF YOU COULD, YOU WOULDN'T BE HERE, RIGHT?
THE PROBLEM IS--
THERE'S NO PROBLEM. HOLD ON TIGHT.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
ACCELERATING OUR COLLECTIVE MOLECULES FAST ENOUGH TO VIBRATE THROUGH THAT WALL...
I THINK I'M GOING TO BE S-S-S-SICK.
...IDEALLY WITHOUT EITHER OF YOU BECOMING UNSTABLE AND EXPLODING IN THE PROCESS.
T-T-T-TOMMY, S-S-S-STOP!
I'M D-D-D-DEFINITELY GOING TO BE S-S-S-SICK.
DO NOT YAK ON ME. I WILL KILL YOU.
AND RUIN AN OTHERWISE PERFECT RESCUE MISSION?

THINK ABOUT IT. BILLY'S NOT THE PROBLEM. THE PROBLEM IS WANDA MAXIMOFF.
SHE'S THE ONE WHO LOST HER MIND. SHE'S THE ONE WHO MADE MUTANTS AN ENDANGERED SPECIES. SHE'S THE ONE WHO MURDERED MY DAD.
AND WHY DID SHE DO ALL THAT?
BECAUSE SHE THOUGHT SHE'D LOST HER KIDS.
SO IF WE CAN SHOW HER THAT HER SONS ARE ALIVE AND WELL, SHE CAN UNDO ALL OF IT.
SHE CAN REVERSE THE SPELL, GIVE THE MUTANTS BACK THEIR POWERS...
...AND SHE CAN BRING MY DAD BACK TO LIFE.
CASSIE, I KNOW HOW MUCH YOU MISS YOUR FATHER, BUT--
VISION, SHE ALREADY BROUGHT WONDER MAN BACK FROM THE DEAD. AND CLINT BARTON. SO WHY NOT MY DAD?
IF WE REALLY ARE A FAMILY, WE SHOULD AT LEAST TRY. FOR BILLY'S SAKE.
MY SENTIMENTS EXACTLY, CHILD...

...WHICH IS WHY I THINK IT'S TIME YOU BOYS MET YOUR GRANDFATHER,
MAGNETO
TO BE CONTINUED...